News-Pages of the GSWC

The Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County, Michigan, Inc. 26 June 2018
To Accompany *Family History Capers* Vol. 41, No. 4

GSWC Meetings are held at 1:30 p.m. at the Education Center Auditorium, St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Campus, 5305 Elliott Drive, Ypsilanti, Michigan, usually the fourth Sunday of the month, September to May.

Upcoming Meetings Fall, 2018:

Sunday, September 23, 2018: "Researching Polish Family History" presented by Patricia Yocum. **Class: "Organizing Your Genealogy":** shared by Bobbie Snow and Omer Jean Winborn.

Sunday, October 28, 2018: "Colonial Research in America" given by Karen Krugman. **Class: "Colonial Experiences"** offered by GSWC Panel.

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Report on Recent Meetings:

March 22, 2018: "Using Facebook in Your Genealogical Research" given by Katherine Willson. Ms. Willson presented information on how to connect with groups on Facebook and how to keep your personal information secure.

In searching on Facebook, a researcher will encounter groups and pages. A group can hold interactive discussion among its members. A page is mostly an announcement place. Search for names or places.

Ms. Willson gave pointers on how to create an account on Facebook in eight easy steps. She suggested that a person provide made-up information to many of the questions asked during the set up process. These include your name, birthday, and email address.

She explored in detail security settings on Facebook and explained how to manage notifications. The suggestions she gave provided valuable information on how to protect yourself while using Facebook.

More information about Ms. Willson can be obtained at her website: SocialMediaGenealogy.com

Class: "Discovering Your Roots: Your Ancestors in State Records" by John Philip Colletta via DVD, moderated by Marcia McCrary. Mr. Colletta began with an overview of state archives.

Every state has an archives and a library (some combine them with a historical society.) All have websites. Search for the state name and archives.

There are two types of state archives: **centralized**, which is usually located in the state capital, and **regional** where sites are spread around the state.

Note that records are transferred to an archive exactly as they were created, and are not re-organized. To find them look first for the name of the agency that created the record, then use finding aids, checklists, and indexes. Consult the website of the archives, then look for their catalog. The home page may have links to resources and information pages. Check for the terms "Family History" or "Genealogy Resources", also try entering a place name.

Be aware that they may have records earlier than the creation of the state, such as territorial records; these may include records of what are now other states.

Suggestions for more information:

Eichholz, ed. *Ancestry's Red Book*
Everton Publishers, *The Handybook for Genealogists*
National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, www.nagara.org

April 22, 2018: "Demystifying Michigan Court Records" presented by Jessica Harden, archivist at the Archives of Michigan. Ms. Harden discussed what types of cases are heard in what courts, the types of documents contained in court files, where records are held, and how to find case numbers related to a given name.

The types of courts that exist in Michigan are:

Supreme Court—Michigan's highest court.
Court of Appeals—Michigan's intermediate court.
Circuit Count—trial court that hears felony criminal cases, civil cases over $25,000 and cases involving children and families.
District Court—trial court that hears misdemeanor criminal cases.
Probate Court—trial court that handles wills and estates.
Federal District Court—federal court that hears cases involving naturalization.

Genealogists will probably be most interested in the circuit and probate court records.

Ms. Harden briefly described documents commonly found in case records. Divorce case files are located in

the chancery division of the circuit court and criminal case files may be found in the same court. Probate files (such as estate files) are in the probate court.

There are various access tools for court records. These include name indexes, case number indexes, calendars, and registers of action or docket books. Alternates to case files include court journals, decree books, and common rule books.

Michigan court records may be held in the Archives of Michigan, individual County Courthouses, or the National Archives at Chicago.

Class: "Ypsilanti Court Records" by Marcia McCrary. Since 2015 Mrs. McCrary has been indexing the criminal court dockets held by the Ypsilanti Historical Society. She has more than 11,000 names in the data base, from 1910 to 1940, with 80 more volumes to be indexed. The Ypsilanti Historical Society is located at 220 N. Huron St in Ypsilanti. The Ypsilanti Archives, in the basement of the same building, also answers queries about Ypsilanti ancestors. The email address for the Archives is yhs.archives@gmail.com. A decision will be made soon as to where the names in the database will be found on the internet.

Each entry consists of the person's name, page, title of book, and year. The type of crime is not indicated, but an aggregate listing is being maintained, causing some interesting discussion at the meeting. Types of crimes found in these records range from "assault and battery", and "drunk and disorderly", to "traffic in milk bottles", and having "four in the driver's seat".

Two of the Society's members have visited the Archives because they saw relatives' names on the listing during the talk. One of them was already aware of crimes committed by his family, but the other person found some surprising information! Send an email to: info@washtenawgenealogy.org if you have questions about the court indexing.

May 20, 2018: "Inspiring Children to Genealogy" presented by Lori Fox. Ms. Fox organized her talk into four sections: traditions, show and tell, activities and writing.

A tradition is something that has been done for many years or generations or an event that starts today. This could be cooking, celebrations, reunions, duties and remembrances. She gave an example of a recipe in her family for German dumplings, which her mother made. Other examples of traditions include: celebrations such as birthday parties, vacations, and family picnics.

Show and tell includes photographs, heirloom furniture, family Bibles, diaries or written documents, and stories about an ancestor.

Possible activities: a trip to do research on the family, or visiting the courthouse, library, cemeteries, and museums; or holding a family reunion.

The final topic discussed was writing ranging from diaries, scrapbooks, research from the library, and letters, to your family history.

In conclusion, Ms. Fox emphasized that in order to keep a child's interest in genealogy you should remember the following: "Make it short!", "Be spontaneous!", "Take advantage of opportunities!", and "No interest today does not mean no interest ever!"

Class: "There are no Dumb Questions in Genealogy" by a GSWC panel.
Questions ranged from Pedigree Thief [*Google Chrome extension*], public vs private trees, and how to file family material. This is always an interesting discussion! Thanks for bringing your questions.

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Elected at the Annual Meeting on May 20, 2018.
Term of office July 2018–June 2020:

President: Marcia McCrary
1st Vice President: Tim Salatin
Corresponding Secretary: Rob Steward
At-Large Board Members: Royla Furniss, Carolyn Griffin and Nancy Howard

The newly elected Nominating Committee for the following year: **Barbara Giezentaner, Royla Furniss and Linda Williams**.

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The next meeting of the **DNA Special Interest Group** will be in September. Small groups may meet over the summer. Contact GSWC member Rodger Wolf rawolf@umich.edu.

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